

Department of Public Health
and Human Services

Section:
OTHER BENEFITS/REQUIREMENTS

TANF CASH ASSISTANCE

Subject:
Work Support Payments

Supersedes: TANF 704-2 (01/01/06); Bulletin TB-19

References: ARM 37.78.102; ARM 37.78.425 (10)

GENERAL RULE--Beginning in February 2005, a Work Support Payment (WSP) became available to TANF families whose case closed due to **earned income** and the closure met the definition of a **qualifying event**. This is a bridge-the-gap payment between the closure of TANF and the receipt of the new or increased earned income that caused the closure.

A TANF household that meets eligibility criteria will be eligible for a payment of \$375.00 the month following the closure of the case.

The participant does NOT have to apply for a WSP. The Eligibility Case Manager will automatically evaluate the closure of each TANF case for WSP eligibility. **The Eligibility case manager is responsible for authorization of the WSP on TEAMS.**

ELIGIBILITY

1. The case must be closed due to a qualifying event. A qualifying event is NEW Earned Income or INCREASED Earned Income of an existing assistance unit member that causes the case to close.

NOTE: If, as a result of the earned income of the household, the TANF grant is less than the Child Support collected, evaluate the history of the Child Support payments. Determine if payments have been received consistently over a reasonable period of time (at least two months) and that it is likely that the CS will continue to be collected. If the above holds true, this household is eligible for the WSP as long as all other eligibility criteria are met. If not, deny the WSP.

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NOTE: A household that is receiving extended benefits for any reason, may be eligible for a WSP, if the case closed due to new or increased earned income of an existing assistance unit member.

2. The household must receive Montana TANF cash assistance in the month of closure. WSP is available **only** in the month immediately following the month of closure.
3. The earned income change was reported timely (within 10 days of having knowledge of the change).

4. The income was verified timely (within 10 days of request for verification) unless there is good cause for not doing so. Example, the employer has to request verification from out-of-state corporate headquarters.
5. The household or any current member of the household has not received a WSP in the last 12 months.

WSP is not available if:

**INELIGIBLE
HOUSEHOLDS/
NO QUALIFYING
EVENT**

1. The household was denied Montana TANF cash assistance in the month of application. (The case did not meet basic eligibility requirements for TANF and benefits were not authorized for the month prior to the increased income.)
2. The household does not have NEW or INCREASED earned income.
3. Earnings were not reported or timely (within 10 days of having knowledge of the change).
4. Earnings were not verified timely (within 10 days of request).
5. The household or a current member of the household received a WSP within the last 12 months.
6. A member of the household was sanctioned and the decrease in household members in the assistance unit caused the case to close due to income.

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NOTE: If a sanction has already been imposed on any member of the assistance unit, and good cause for non-compliance does not exist, regardless of earned income the household is ineligible for a WSP.

**OTHER
PROGRAMS**

Work Support Payments are excluded for eligibility determination in Medicaid and Child Care. It is also excluded for **ongoing** Food Stamp cases.

EXCEPTION: If the individual who is the PI in a case that closes for IEN is eligible for a WSP, joins another household in which he is not the PI nor is he coded 'IN', the WSP will be countable against the new household. The fact that the individual may not be the PI in the new case is irrelevant. He was the PI in case #1 at the time of issuance and therefore, the payment and the 12-month ineligibility period is attached to him.

If a WSP has been received by the household, **prior to a Food Stamp application in the same month**, it is countable unearned income for the month of application.

TEAMS AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURE

WSP will not count as a TANF timeclock month.

On AFED, enter the appropriate closure code in the 'DENIAL CLOSURE REASON' field.

NOTE: TEAMS will automatically populate the DENIAL CLOSURE REASON field with (TLE) if **Time Limited** benefits have been Exhausted.

To authorize a WSP, enter the approval code '**WPR.**' in the WORK SUPPORT PAYMENT field.

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To deny a WSP, enter the appropriate denial code:

- **NQE** (No Qualifying Event)
- **UTR** (Untimely Report or Verification of Earned Income)
- **SAN** (Closure due to Sanction)

System Generated Closure:

- **TLE** (Time Limits Exhausted- /No Extended Benefits Authorized). The TLE code cannot be changed.

NOTE: TEAMS will also automatically populate the WORK SUPPORT PAYMENT field with a **denial code of TIM** (Time Limitation Exceeded). This code can be changed.

- **TIM** (Time Limitations Exceeded-System generated)

Example: The family in their 60th month meets all the requirements of the WSP program, including the increased earned income. They would qualify for a WSP even though their case would have closed for using their 60 months. Change the TIM code to WPR and authorize the payment. See TEAMS Processing Guide Section 700-P.5 for further details.

NOTE: Every closure requires either an approval code or a denial code in the WORK SUPPORT PAYMENT field.

**ISSUANCE
PROCEDURE**

Work Support Payments are processed electronically by Fiscal Services Division, using a procedure similar to the issuance of Vendor Payments. A Work Support Payment is issued **only by check**. The participant can expect to receive it within five to seven working days.

ISSUED IN ERROR

If the WSP payment was issued due to false information provided by the participant, proceed with the regular IPV/disqualification process. An overpayment will not be pursued in this instance.

**≥ TANF
ELIGIBILITY IN
THE WSP
MONTH**

If the household reapplies for TANF in the WSP month, the full amount of the WSP is counted as unearned income against the household in determining eligibility. An individual who was included in the assistance unit in the month prior to the WSP payment would not be eligible in a different assistance unit during the WSP month without counting the WSP as income.

Example #1: Sally is included in the assistance unit with specified relatives, Uncle Pete and Aunt Gladys and their 2 children. Uncle Pete's earned income for April closes the case for May and a WSP is authorized. On May 10th, Aunt Gladys comes in to apply for a child only grant for Sally. The application is denied because Sally was included in the assistance unit in April so the amount of the WSP payment is countable income, putting her over the income limits. If she meets other eligibility criteria, Sally would be eligible the month following the WSP ineligibility month.

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